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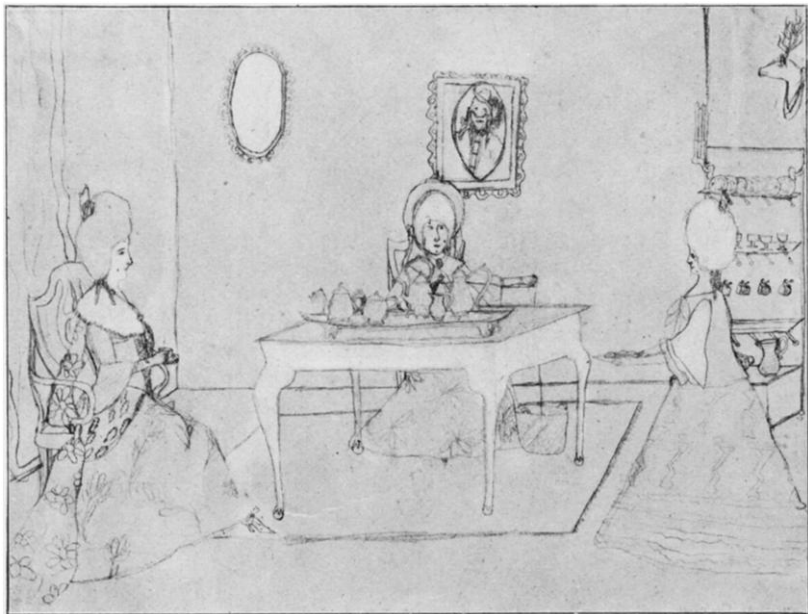
## DRAWING AND PAINTING IN THE ELEMENTARY GRADES.

IN addition to studying the relation of this work to other subjects in the school, it is the aim of the teacher of drawing and painting to find the best ways of developing technical skill and æsthetic power in this work. The age of the child, the motive for his work, his familiarity with the subject to be represented, his previous technical information, his habit of expressing himself in this manner, the pictures which he has to consult, the technical guidance from his teacher, and the appearance of his environment, are some of the influences affecting the choice of means for attaining the desired result.

Through the memory and imaginative drawings asked for, the teacher is able to correct certain errors which seem to be characteristic of the early work of all younger children and of some of the older. Many times the child must be closely questioned as to what he intended to show in his drawing, and he generally has a good explanation for his work. As he is guided by the teacher to notice what he can see from *one point of view*, his work changes its maplike character and becomes more and more the picture. Until he tried to make pictures there had been no reason for him carefully to study an object or a scene from one point of view. Through his attempts to draw he begins to realize this important limitation of this particular form of expression. As the artists say, he is "learning to see." It has been noted that many children show an unexpected advance in technical skill during the summer months, in which time they have done no regular drawing.

To the student of art history, and to those who have learned to value works of art for many different qualities, the work of the children often brings pleasure such as that given by early Italian paintings, and it seems but fair that the work of the children should be compared sympathetically with the work of those in the childhood of art. To help him to success in his chosen field is imperative.

In the second grade the seven-year-old children have been studying the life of the wandering shepherds, and they were told of camels bringing to these people many things which they needed. They were reminded of the rugs in the tents and the beautiful colors in which the wool was dyed—and these materials the camels brought. They had been dyeing and knew about such



A BOSTON TEA PARTY.—DOROTHY LLEWELYN.

necessary material. Then the children were asked to make pictures of the camels coming with their burdens. There were photographs and drawings of camels in the room, and after they started to draw they asked again and again to be allowed to look at the pictures of camels, because they wished to make their drawings better. The children were seeking information eagerly. The pictures were like magnets. The visible result of this close observation might be a rather shaky drawing, but because of that drawing the scrutiny of the photographs was intense. Of course, if it had been possible at the time, it would have been most interesting

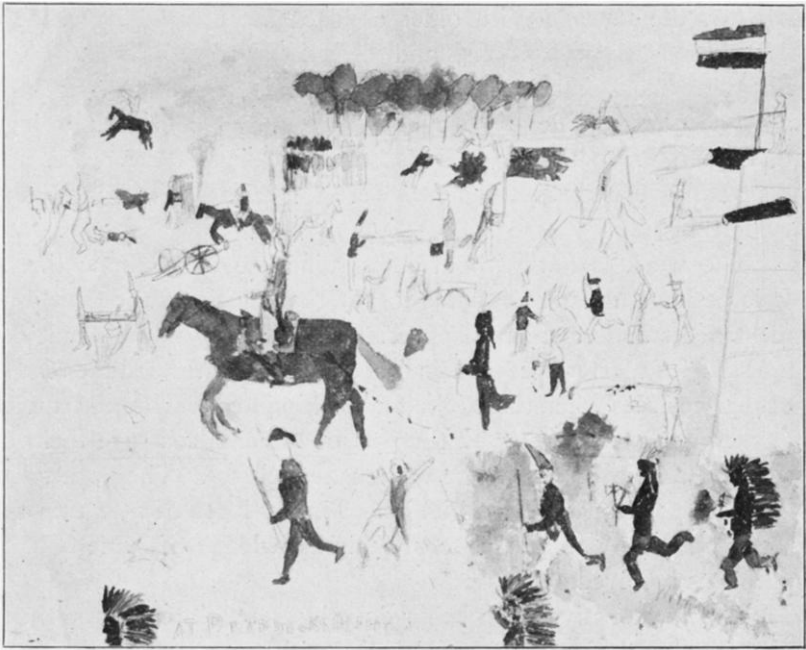
for the children to see the live animal or the museum specimen, but after that the photograph was the best source of information. A large outline drawing of a camel was shown to them as being nearer to their stage in technique than the photograph. After this, when reference is made to the camels which come to the tent-dwellers from the outside world, these children will not have



THE BOSTON TEA PARTY.—EDWARD NATHAN.

a vague impression of what is being told to them, as they have mental images as strong as their young eyes and devoted attention could make them. The dictionary itself, which we think of as having to do with words and explanations in words, confesses to a weakness in giving us pictures of animals. Just so the children come to understand that all their explanation in words is not complete without the picture.

These children had drawn sheep, so that this was an opportunity to call attention to proportions. The camel has long legs; the sheep has short legs. Direction of line was pointed out by



BRADDOCK'S DEFEAT.—WILLIAM VAN HOESEN.

The picture by William is considered by him as a study for a more finished picture, and is not yet completed. After drawing many of the figures, it became necessary for him to think of the landscape background, and he had to find the month in which it happened, as the time of year would make such a difference in the appearance of the landscape. It was found that it took place in July. For a child to remember the year, but not the season in which the event occurred, is to reveal that the thinking has not been sufficiently pictorial. William's picture is an example of allowing the child to make the most of his art feeling at the time. Having in mind what people in general would think of the work, the temptation to the teacher would be to stop the composition after the first horse was drawn, and direct the child to a careful study of the proportions and characteristic lines of a horse. This would have led him away from the thoughts of the historic scene. As it was, he thought of point after point of the event, feeling the scene dramatically. Before recording each position he must have first acted it out in his mind. Here there are links with the literary, the dramatic, the historic.

referring to the steep lines of the side view of a camel's back, contrasted with the more nearly level lines of the side view of the

back of the sheep. With older children these could have been understood as proportions, and directions of lines related to imaginary horizontals and perpendiculars. The younger children were carrying the general shape in their minds, and then trying to express it by their drawings; and the simple references to long and short, steep and level, were the efforts made for their technical skill.

The work is not without its significance on æsthetic lines. It is perhaps not unreasonable to say that much of the development of æsthetic taste and appreciation of beauty is the result of the study of masterpieces. The first step is taken toward the study of masterpieces when there is felt a kinship in endeavor. Attempts at drawing and painting on the part of the children give them a sense of relationship to those who make pictures. They can take a few steps in analyzing a picture. Their tribute of attention to a picture has a value because of their knowledge of some of the problems involved.

The constructive work being done by the children at the time is of interest to the teacher of drawing. A woman, telling of her experience as a young student in a school which was rich in equipment for doing work in the studio and workshop, said that just as she became interested in one mode of expression, she was told to leave it, and she hastened to another. She seemed to look back with no pleasure in her work, owing to the unpleasant spirit of "Move on." At the time these different occupations were taken up independently—for their own sake. Unity of subject in the midst of many modes of expression seems the way to preserve calm. Having a general subject, the children can approach it in these various ways, thus receiving new impressions. The pictorial record should come at the time of great interest in the subject; and to say that this is delayed until the special teacher is present, to give advice, is to confess to an unfortunate state of affairs. The children, through the work which they have with special instruction, should gain power to be used independently in such cases. The habit of making paintings and drawings is extremely important. The difference in the attitude of the children toward the work is evident in a class. Children who are

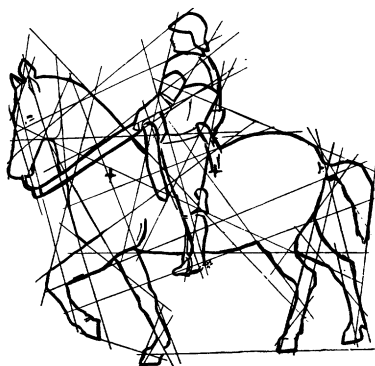
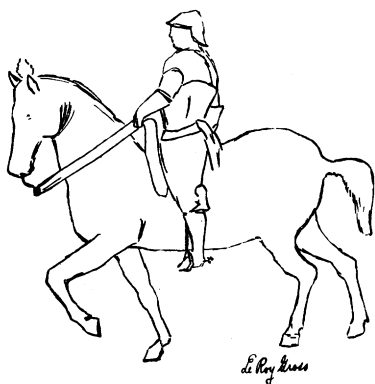
gifted, who grasp methods quickly, but who have not had the constant practice of year after year of such work, fail, compared with children less gifted, but in training.

It is perhaps not generally understood that making a drawing calls into play very simple thinking. There are various ways of making a drawing, similar results being achieved by different means. The methods of various artists differ widely. However, an artist probably belongs to one of two classes. The artist of one class has great power of visualization. He can call up a shape as a whole or in parts. As he looks at the canvas or paper upon which he is to work, he knows in which place each part of the drawing is to take its place. An artist of the second class, having little ability to call up distinct mental pictures, prefers to do his drawing from the object or model. The children in their drawing and painting show characteristics strong enough to place them in one class or the other. Of course, in the case of the artists and the children there is sometimes a combination of these methods in the carrying out of a single drawing. Also, the same child at different ages may prefer one way or another of doing it. In the case in which power of visualization is not depended upon, very simple thinking is necessary during the making of a drawing. Strong will-power, determination, patience, and an understanding and application of certain simple principles of drawing, will bring success. Most persons at the close of a day spent in drawing from objects, providing the mind has devoted itself intensely to the drawing, not allowing the undercurrent of irrelevant thought to be too strong, will feel vacant-minded, and will recognize how machinelike has been the steady repetitions of making judgments as to proportion, direction of line, relation of point to point.

It is seldom that the public is permitted to see drawings and paintings in the course of construction. The artist is apt to be bored by the questions of those who have not studied the art, and he is irritated by the usual expectation that the picture should look well at each stage of its production. We are accustomed to see the scaffoldings about buildings in course of erection, and know something of the growth of the work. The painter conceals his picture from the public until he has removed the scaffolding.

It is well known how highly artists and students prize the studies and unfinished work left by great artists. These often reveal the reasons for the master's supremacy.

We have here a drawing by a boy of thirteen years of age of the eighth grade. The grade made several trips to the Art Institute to study and make sketches of objects in the collections, and this drawing of Verrocchio's masterpiece was made at one of those times, and took forty minutes. It was done in pencil and was inked later, that it might be printed. A tracing of it accompanies it, this tracing having lines drawn upon it to give informa-



tion concerning some of the thoughts involved in its construction. It is in the nature of a thought-record. The crosses have to do with proportion. The length of the horse's head is taken as the unit of measurement. The crosses from left to right show the headlengths across the body in a horizontal line, beginning at the end of the nose. The crosses in the perpendicular line show the headlengths noted, for determining the height of the horse. The straight lines are those which determine the direction of lines. Each runs along part of a line of the drawing, and then, extending in both directions, *cuts through certain points* on other lines. Only part of the lines is given, but they suggest what was taking place in the boy's mind for those forty minutes. If an absolutely accurate drawing were made of the statue, each line of the drawing, if extended in both directions, would cut through exactly the same corresponding points that a ruler would appear to hit if



held up and allowed to run along the line and extending in both directions. It should be noted that a continuous line, when it changes its direction, must be treated as a new problem. Curved lines must depend upon visualization.

When the children become dissatisfied with their drawings based entirely upon visualization, the only hope for their work lies in their ability to grasp, and determination to carry out these principles. They must become skilful also in making judgments as to the value of the angle which the straight lines in the object form with an imaginary perpendicular or horizontal.

In regard to color, there is much in the thinking that becomes automatic. Most color which is seen does not exist separately in the color-box, and there must be a combination of colors made in order to repre-



DRAWING FROM LIFE.

sent it in the painting. There must first be synthesis of color; then, when a color is met which is recognized as being like the one produced by a certain combination of colors, the analysis will be correct in proportion to the accuracy of the memory of the synthesis. We see at this point why the act of combining colors on the palette comes more and more into the realm of the automatic. The brush of the artist goes from color to color, making a combination in response to a color seen, as the fingers of a musician seek the piano keys at the sight of the written music. As the painter studies his palette and its combinations, his ability to perceive color becomes stronger. At first it would seem as if this automatic response to color would simplify matters to such an extent that it could handle the entire problem of color. On the contrary, the painter sees new color until he feels that life is too short for its adequate recognition. It may be understood through this why painters feel that they must keep in practice in

using color, just as the musician must keep up his technique. It is needless to say that there are some painters whose chief concern is in regard to local coloring, and who are content to stop when the obvious is expressed.

In considering the matter we find that the judgments to be made and recorded in a drawing are simple; they deal with new relations in each case. It involves each time simple but *new* thinking. Color is more fixed, and hence can be coped with, by thinking, which gradually takes its place in the regions of automatic response.

In the ever-growing conviction of the tremendous power of drawing and painting as a lever in education, there has been some neglect of their relation to æsthetic enjoyment. The groups of wax figures in the Field Museum, arranged as if engaged in various occupations, convey much information to us. Certainly they cannot be said to give rise to æsthetic enjoyment, as does the Verrocchio Colleoni. There is danger that in the hearty appreciation of its power in dealing with an immediate educational end the more distant goal, the development of æsthetic feeling, be ignored. One of the simplest ways of working toward the æsthetic end, at a time when the summing up of information seems the sole object of the drawing, is to ask the pupil to place his drawing or painting within a rectangle of his own drawing. By doing so, he has to consider space relations and has an opportunity to give expression to his æsthetic feeling.

There is work which demands a great amount of selection on the part of the creator, owing to the limitations inherent in the materials to be used. In the group of pictorial arts, a mural decoration, through having to keep its place as a part of the architecture, and the water-color prints, through the limitations of the wooden blocks, take rank in dignity above other, more realistic, work.

The artist who sums up many facts by a few modelings with his brush makes an appeal to the person viewing the picture to supply the facts not recorded, and thus understand the intention. It is really a tribute to the *connoisseur* when the artist presents for his inspection a work of art in which much is suggested rather

than carried out, as it gives the art lover a share in the intellectual pleasure of creation, as he himself is thus called upon to complete the work of art by a reference to his own impressions of nature.

In view of these facts, when the æsthetic side of the child's development is to be considered, it seems good to encourage, so far as possible, the making of designs, and the *embodiment* of them in such products as textiles, pottery, metal-work, and wood-work.

To stimulate the perception of beauty, the children should be taken to art museums. They should observe, not merely pictures and statues, but examples of applied design. After seeing good examples of architecture, furniture, textiles, metal-work, and bookbinding, they should learn that the design in each case was probably first embodied in a drawing or piece of modeling. They will thus be more able to understand the importance of drawing and painting in its relation to the manipulated products of the world. They will perhaps gain some knowledge of what it may mean some day to them, if they are to have anything to do with making, or selling, or owning such constructive work of mankind. They will learn that drawing and painting have not alone to do with recording the appearance of what is already in the world, but is one of the first steps in expression of what is to come into the world through man's rearrangement of material. Having seen architects' plans, drawings for furniture, for machinery, they will be in possession of the fact that drawing and painting is a universal language, through which a man can make explanations to his fellow-men.

In the schoolroom care should be taken that the children be not weary of pictures. Let the illustrations and drawings be available, but not in evidence at times when their significance is gone. Pictures have not the advantages of covers, like books. To many sensitive minds the knowledge that there are so many pictures in the world is distressing. In the case of pictures, let one speak at a time. We should guard against permanent decorations in the room, or at least be extremely careful in their selection. Pictures with figures in them are apt to appear monotonous because of the figures' arrested action. Landscapes are

less monotonous; and casts in the round are better still, owing to the different points of view possible because of the three dimensions. The changing light also helps to modify their appearance. A few beautiful designs rich in color, or well-selected textiles—even small scraps simply framed—furnish in a schoolroom much-needed color-food. Modern life in the city is so poor in color that we must have such things about to remind us that such hues exist. Familiarity with color thus gained helps in the recognition of it in nature.

I come now to the inevitable *need*. To meet this need, there would have to be such an expenditure of time and money; such co-operation of educators, scientists, artists, photographers, and publishers; such interest on the part of all our universities, that it would seem as if it would have to be handled by our government. Since educators have seen the wisdom of reinforcing written or oral description by a display of pictures on the subject, there have been constantly growing collections of pictures in schools in connection with the library. Under the most favorable circumstances we have a well-classified set of pictures, quickly available. Looking at a set of pictures bearing on one subject, we find large pictures, small pictures, photographs colored and uncolored, wood engravings, steel engravings, etchings, photo-engravings and pictures in half-tone. We find work by good artists, work by poor artists, pictures reproduced from oil paintings, water-colors, pen-and-ink and wash drawings. Some have descriptions, others none. The best has been done under the circumstances, and, compared to the rude woodcuts of the ancestral primer, the well-illustrated text-books and these mounted pictures are marvelous riches. However, there is the ideal. Let authorities on their various subjects, and the educators knowing the needs of the children, select typical photographs or drawings. Let these be redrawn by able artists, on a large scale. These pictures should be criticised by the authority and the educator, to see that the points have been shown in the drawing. Then the authority should write a brief description explaining the points, in such a way that it will be hard to misinterpret. Other countries have been amazed at the way in which we have allowed

foreign nations to secure the masterpieces of our best artists; at the same time they have praised our leading magazines for the high standard of the art work there maintained. We have the artists trained to do this work; we have here publishers of great enterprise; we have educators appreciating the information that — after the real thing — only the picture can give. If the magazines would permit the work of Howard Pyle alone to be redrawn on a large scale, there would come into existence a fine group, upon our early history. It is needless to point out to teachers the various subjects which could thus be enriched. The whole class giving its attention to the large picture is much more desirable than passing about smaller pictures. For those whose days in school are unfortunately few, this gift of the highest authorities to the elementary school would be of great value. The pictures need not be limited to the strictly school subjects, but provide bypaths in art and science for the minds in school having a special bent. Vast museum space would have to be owned in order to contain the objects which can be shown upon a piece of paper. We need these windows into the world in our schoolroom. We should see to it that our schoolrooms are not prisons. Our universities can well spare time for this mission of giving some of their best to our children.

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